2: Skrefsrud M-5 (1870-1871) 1942 AW42 Santal AW42

Jog Mañjhi says: Please, bring some molasses. When this is brought, they give the village headman and his deputy and after them all who are there. 584 [262]

The Jog Mañjhi then says: Honoured friends, as you see, we are drying people; otherwise in olden times they were saying, the rich people dry paddy and husks, as for us, we are drying you friends; for this, honoured friends, be especially grieved. Then the visitors answer: The grieving ones, Sir, have all gone in advance, to Somae's narrow valley, to the fine sand they have gone to herd crocodiles. Thereupon they eat, and when this is done the Jog Mañjhi again says: Listen, we have cut and cleared the threshing-floor, please, bring us again some parched and flattened rice. They bring this and give to all who are there. The Jog Mañjhi then says: Please, bring the friends some water from the closet of the ancestors[7]. Then they give them each one brass-cup full of beer. They finish eating and drinking.

Now the Jog Mañjhi calls out: You wife of the eldest son (if there is no such one, he will call some other girl), come here, pick up these leaf-plates and throw them away; bring some water in a loṭa, and pour some out in a brass-cup for all of us; we shall wash our hands and mouth. When they have washed themselves, they give each of them two leaf-cups of beer. They then come out from the house, enter the cow-shed[8] and sit down on bedsteads. The Jog Mañjhi says: You, wife of the eldest son (if there is such a one there), please bring a hookah[9] and tobacco. She brings this, and they hand it over to the visitors. [515] [352] [296]

The Jog Mañjhi now goes into the house and says to the father of the young man: Look here, Sir, what shall we give the visitors to eat with the rice? He answers: Some of you call my eldest son. They call him; he comes and says: Why have you called me, father? His father says to him in reply: I say, my son, bring the biggest castrated goat. He goes and brings it. [231]

The Jog Mañjhi then says: Do bring some water in a loṭa. They bring this and pour the water on the head of the castrated goat; thereupon they kill it.

They ask the visitors to sit down and take food. When they have given everybody rice and curry, the Jog Mañjhi says: As you see, Sirs, you are our friends; as for us, we are drying the friends; our ancestors of old, the rich ones, they would dry paddy and husks; as you see, we are drying you, our friends; let this especially grieve you. The visitors then reply: Yes, Sir, the grieving ones have gone to Somae's narrow valley, to the fine sand to herd crocodiles. Now they eat; when they have done, they wash and chew tobacco with lime.

Before they say good-bye to them, they again take them inside and give them beer. When they have drunk, they come out to be said good-bye to. They stand in a row, and while in this position they salute each other. Thereupon they see them off, and they go away.

[343] [352]

[7] See Santal Dictionary s. v. bhitar. [8] During day-time, when no cattle is there, the cow-shed is commonly used for visitors. Bedsteads are placed here to sit down on. [9] See Santal Dictionary s. vv. huka and thamakur.

§ Oslo Etn. Mus. – Bedding.

2: Skrefsrud M-5 (1870-1871) 1942 AW42 Santal AW42

584
[276] When they have done eating and drinking, they wash themselves, and coming out into the courtyard they chew tobacco. The Jog Mañjhi then says: Look here, Sir, when shall we see the visitors off? They say to the Jog Mañjhi: Please go at once in and see whether there is room or not. He does this, there is room. Then they take the visitors (viz., the village headman and his deputy and the father of the prospective bridegroom and with him two-three people) inside and spread out mats for them to sit on. When they have sat down, the Jog Mañjhi says: Please, bring the beer. They do so and give it to the visitors; when this is done, the fathers of the bridegroom and the bride sit down together in one place, and they bring them beer at the same time. Both of them then say: Please, co-parent-in-law, let us drink this beer. While they are drinking they say: Let us salute the friends. They both salute every one of the visitors. Thereupon the two co-parents-
[539] in-law take hold of each other's hands and move them three times backwards and forwards between them; they raise them up towards their heads; thereupon they butt each other's shoulders three times, and when this is done they again move their hands backwards and forwards between them and raising them towards their heads they say: Saheb! At this moment they sing:

Pleasure, pleasure, pleasure, o mother,
Pleasure, look what enjoyment!
On both sides the co-parents-in-law
Are tied together with chains,
On both sides the co-parents-in-law have
great enjoyment.

The girl's father then says: Listen, my co-parent-in-law, now this is your house. And the bridegroom's father says: The house far away is yours, my co-parent-in-law. Thereupon both co-parents-in-law say to each other: My co-parent-in-law, when you somehow were wandering about in villages and hamlets, were coming hunting and chasing, up to this time in the plains and open country, in the forest and jungle, you have drunk water from the dug-out holes in the rivers, from the pools; now from to-day please cease doing this, there is the shade of a pole with creepers, water in a gourd-bottle, the nest of a Finch Lark, please come straight here with a rush; don't turn to the right or to the left; when you somehow come wandering in this direction, come in here on your way past; you will drink some water on your way; you will also visit the children on your way. Talking together they finish the beer.

The visitors then say: Sir Jog Mañjhi, please make haste and send us off. Then they go out into the courtyard. The people of the bride's side stand on one side, and those of the bridegroom's side on one side, opposite to each other; they salute the visitors one after the other; when they have been said good-bye to they go home. At this time the Jog Mañjhi says: Honoured friends, as you know, you plucked hill-vegetables for us,

3t Mukherjea O. Y-4, 5 (ca. 1933-1939) 1962
AW42 Santal AW42
[RG3]

CHAPTER III

ECONOMIC LIFE

The Santal traditions are silent as to whether Thàkur Jiu, after Man's first lapse at Khòj kaman, pronounced a curse on them that out of the sweat of their brow shall they earn their bread as on their Biblical prototype, but had He done so, it would have thrown some light on the strenuous struggle for existence of the Santal in this mundane world. Food, drink, shelter and the luxury of a fire have remained to this day as objects of man's instinctive worldly cravings, and Santals though no exception to the general rule, and while feeling the pinch like others, try to hide everything under a smile.

In this chapter, we propose to give the reader some idea of the material culture of the Santal on the basis of our enquiries in a number of villages in the state of Mayurbhanj[1].

The first item in the daily routine of the men is to rise from their sleep with the first grey of morning. They then have a wash and may indulge in a smoke of "puṅgis" (*a home-made cigarette made of sal-leaves*). Now their fields call them, and on they

[1] The villages visited were Katsirsi, Andharia, Tursibani, Tentulbati (Muruda) and Tikaripara (Rairangpur).

31 Mukherjea O. Y-4,5 (ca. 1933-1939) 1962
AW42 Santal AW42

boiled in water and mixed with salt and turmeric, serve as sauces in the Santal dinner.

We have already got some idea about the Santal use of "mohua" oil in cooking. This oil, they massage also over their bodies, but after and not before their daily ablution, as is the custom with some Hindus. Like the rest of the world, they delight in a smoke of tobacco. We have already noticed the preparation of the "pungi", the Santal cigarette, called also *chuti* in the Santal Parganas. This is, we were told, men's monopoly, the women smoking only occasionally. But raw tobacco, mixed with lime in the form of "khaini" (*Hindi*) is chewed frequently by both men and women as a perpetual stimulant.

No review of the material background of Santal life will be complete without a reference to their domestic animals. Cows, buffaloes, sheep and goats meet your eyes in the cattle-yard; pigs grunt, geese cackle and fowls flutter about mixed up with pigeons flying down from their improvised nests inside earthen pitchers suspended from roofs.

Drink

"Give me rice-beer, or give me death," may be the summary of a Santal's instinctive craving for

4: Biswas D, E-3, 4 (1931-1945) 1956
AW42 Santal AW42
SANTAL PARGANAS

273 brew beer by Maran Buru who came to them and told them he was their grand father.

276 **Smoking** :- The Santals are inveterate smokers. The indigenous method of smoking is to take some pieces of dried tobacco leaves, wrap them in a sal leaf, and smoke it like a cheroot. But now a days machine [178] made cigarettes have made their appearance. The manner in which tobacco is most commonly used, is by chewing dried tobacco with lime. Hookas (hubble bubble) have also been introduced among them.

231 **Domesticated Animals** :- Dog is the most important animal to the Santals. Every Santal keeps at least one dog. The chief object of keeping this animal is for hunting though no special breed of dog is kept. They keep cows for milk and oxen to draw ploughs. They sometimes eat their flesh. Buffaloes they keep for above mentioned purposes. Goats and sheep are kept for trade and for food. Pigs are kept by the Santals in large quantity exclusively for food, and these animals do most of the scavenging. They feed them and also let them off to wallow here and there. In the evening they keep these animals in a small room specially prepared for them within the room where they keep cows and buffaloes, a small door is kept which the owner opens every morning before dawn to let the pigs out. Cats are kept by the Santals exclusively to catch rats. Fowls and pigeons increase and multiply apparently without any care being taken of them. They are also scavengers of the village. The Santals keep them to eat and to sacrifice them to their Bongas.

4: Biswas D, E-3, 4 (1931-1945) 1956
AW42 Santal AW42
SANTAL PARGANAS

and it is conducted according to the provision of the Indian Christian Marriage Act.

Material Culture. Material culture of the Santals of the Santal parganas has not much changed. They now wear cotton dhuties, shirts and gangees and the women have accepted cotton saris which are used by the Hindus. The well-to-do Christian Santals wear European dress, *i.e.* coats, pants, shirts, socks and shoes. The christian women wear Saris, blouses and petti coat according to the Hindu style.

Some of the younger men and women of the Christian community go out for employment in the towns and cities and when they come back they display their superior material culture, such as fountain pen, wristwatches and other luxury goods.

Rice beer is their important drink but the Christian missionaries make propaganda in favour of total abstinence, and the Christian Santals are gradually giving up this habit and tea is being substituted for it. Machine made cigarettes are slowly coming into use.

In the preparation of rice it seems they have copied something from the Bengali Hindus. The Santals like the Bengalis use boiled rice for their food and unboiled rice for offering to their tribal deities.

The indigenous husking machine of the Santals is mortar and pestle, but they also use husking lever (dhenki) in husking rice which they have copied from their Hindu neighbours.

The Santals, when they speak among themselves, use their own language. But with the 'Dikhus' in the Santal Parganas they speak in broken Hindi and

5t Culshaw M-5 (1932-1943) 1949 AW42 Santal AW42

salute with the right hand; this is raised towards the face, fingers slightly bent, the fingers of the left hand lightly touching the right forearm. When a Santal is meeting his co-parents-in-law, they embrace breast to breast, exchange jokes, and make use of the inclusive form of the dual pronoun. Honoured guests as well as relations are met with dignified courtesy. Few experiences can be more refreshing than to sit in the courtyard of a Santal home after a long and dusty walk. When greetings have been exchanged, one of the girls of the house comes forward to wash the feet and massage with oil the tired calves. This done, tobacco encased in the rolled leaf of the *sal* tree is offered and gratefully accepted.

Addendum to Chapter I

The following figures for the distribution of Santals have been taken from the Statistical Tables of the *Census Report of India*, 1931. Unfortunately, the figures for 1941 do not distinguish Santals from other primitive tribes, district by district.

Bihar and Orissa		*Bengal*	
Monghyr ..	26,742	Burdwan ..	101,522
Santal Parganas	754,804	Birbhum ..	64,079
Hazaribagh ..	129,103	Bankura ..	114,577
Manbhum ..	282,315	Midnapur ..	169,750
Orissa States ..	278,284	Rajshahi ..	25,591
Bhagalpur ..	30,799	Dinajpur ..	130,328
Purnea	46,965	Jalpaiguri ..	27,859
Balasore	15,444	Rangpur ..	7,410
Singhbhum ..	108,890	Malda	72,145
		Hooghly	38,013
		Murshidabad ..	22,725

(Districts from which only a few Santals were returned have been omitted above.)

In Assam, 101,949 persons were returned as Santali speakers.

The numerical and proportionate distribution of the population in the Bankura district was given as follows:

Total primitive tribes	139,063, 12% of the total
Hindus	920,456, 83% of the total

(Of the Hindus, 102,939 were Brahmin, while 353,675 were recorded as belonging to the Depressed Classes.)

St Culshaw M-5 (1932-1943) 1949 AW42 Santal AW42

585 If the distance between the two villages be great, the party of the bridegroom will have arrived on the outskirts of the bride's village on that evening and are accommodated in a special shelter for the night. They do not enter the village, but at the first sign of approaching morning the go-between comes from the bridegroom's camp, bringing with him a small quantity of the oil and turmeric left over from the bridegroom's anointing, and with this the bride is once more anointed.

585 574 [624] Meanwhile the bridegroom's party make ready to approach the bride's house. The *jogmaṅjhi* and *godet'* of the village meet them at the end of the village street, where they are asked to wait awhile. Mats are placed for them to sit on and they are given tobacco to smoke. The bridegroom's party always enter a village from the west end and leave from the east end. The officials who greet the party are accompanied by a band of young folk from the village who sing and dance and who in the course of their songs make insulting remarks about the bridegroom and the village from which he comes. These insults are expected and have to be accepted in good part. When they at length set out for the bride's house, the bridegroom is carried by a woman who lifts him and carries him on her hip as she would a child. On first arriving at the bride's home, some of her friends pretend that the bridegroom is not properly groomed, so they proceed to shave him again with a leaf for a mirror and a rough piece of wood for a razor. When he greets his future father-in-law he places a necklace round his neck while his father-in-law winds a turban cloth round his head, after which they sprinkle water over each other with a spray of mango leaves. They exchange *pan*[1] and embrace each other. When the bride is brought out of the house she is carried in the same way as the bridegroom, and first of all they sprinkle sun-dried rice over each other (this is called "sowing" the rice), and follow it by sprinkling water with the sprays of mango leaves. The bride is seated in a basket and made to face the west, while the bridegroom faces towards the east. Then he takes from a small wooden box that is wrapped in his waistband the vermilion which he proceeds to place on the bride's head, and as he does so the assembled company make the air resound with shouts of "*Horibol*". This is sheer Hinduism, for it is the invocation of Hari, one of the names of Vishnu the Saviour. The bridegroom helps the bride down from the basket, places an

[606] [576] 585 [177]

[1] The leaf of the *Piper betle*, i.e., rolled with lime, the nut of the areca palm and other spices wrapped inside it. Rarely eaten by Santals except on ceremonial occasions, but very generally used by others in Bengal.